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Duunkpalɔg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan ycla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master, or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

Tɔŋgbana do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpalɔg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

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ing the installation or the funeral of a tendaana, both receive sacrifices. But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages. Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar* (*dugni bɔyar*), the shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpalɔg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiun which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tendaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tendaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tendaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpayara-yayar tendaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders to Duunkpalɔg, where the most important rite of the series was to be performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdem did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who should have come to escort the tendaana-elect to Duunkpalɔg. The Yapaasdem, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

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bɔyar, again, is both literally and socially the domestic replica of the External *Bɔyar*. It is kept at the homestead of the lineage head, and it symbolizes the particular ancestors of that lineage only. Only that particular lineage offers sacrifices through its head to its *dugni bɔyar*, that is, to its own ancestors; all three lineages meet at Duunkpalǝg in ritual homage to all their ancestors. (The *dugni bɔyar* of a Zubiuŋ lineage, as among all the Talis, consists of two small pots embedded in a projecting bulge of the outside wall of the house, together with other sacred paraphernalia, and, as usual, smeared all over with the dried flour, blood, and feathers of many sacrifices.)

The two aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult mark the two poles of clan structure—on the one hand, the relative autonomy of the constituent lineages of the clan; on the other, the unity and the solidarity of the clan, synthesizing these relative autonomies in a wider field of social organization, but according to the same principles of structure that operate to constitute these relatively autonomous units. Though less explicitly, the same pattern of ritual collaboration obtains at Zubiuŋ with respect to the cult of the Earth.

The lineages of other clans with which Zubiuŋ has ties of clanship never participate in sacrifices at Duunkpalǝg or at any of the Zubiuŋ Earth shrines. A linked lineage has ritual ties only with the Zubiuŋ maximal lineage to which it is directly linked, but these ties are very elastic. Thus, in situations in which the corporate identity of one of the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ is emphasized—for example, in the ceremonies of inducting a new tɛndaana into his office, or in the funeral rites of a deceased tɛndaana—members of the linked lineages of that group are nominally obliged to participate in the exoteric phases of the ceremonies. This obligation, however, is not so rigorous as in the case of the other Zubiuŋ lineages.

B. *Ba'ari*. The pattern of ritual collaboration between the component units of Ba'ari is slightly different. There the focal shrine of the clan is the principal sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) consecrated to the Earth, Ba'at Da'a. Important sacrifices there, particularly during the Great Festivals, require the presence of all the constituent lineages of Ba'ari, including the accessory lineages. This is not regarded as inconsistent with the fact that one of the attached lineages, Ba'at-Guŋ, is permitted to intermarry with two of the other lineages, though otherwise exercising the rights and obligations of close *sɔnzɔp*. Ba'ari lacks the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, and the lineage (*dugni*) *bɔyar* of each of its constituent lineages is associated with Ba'at Da'a, which doubles the functions of an External *Bɔyar* and a focal *tɔŋgban*. Ba'at Da'a has, in fact, two ritual aspects. In its esoteric aspect it is the ideological pivot around which the clan revolves. Only the clan takes part in the cult associated with this aspect; linked lineages of other clans have no share in it. It also has an exoteric aspect connected with certain phases of the cycle of the Great Festivals. Again, linked lineages take no part in the ritual that defines this aspect. But the people of Gbizug have a formal role in these rites, and so have Wakii and Yaɣazuor, who are *sɔnzɔp*-by-courtesy. These clans participate, not in virtue of ties of clanship with Ba'ari, but by reason of their ritual bonds. They have a

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facts with which he was faced in the field. Maximal lineages are the smallest corporate units that emerge in political action. The social and political relations between maximal lineages are regulated by ties of clanship. These ties constitute fields of social relations in which larger corporate units, which we have called clans, emerge. These are the largest corporate units that act in political matters. At the level of social and political relations between clans—that is to say, where the fields of social relations, constituted by clanship ties, overlap one another—clanship ties no longer suffice as the organizing mechanism. Here we meet with the interaction of more complex units and regions of Tale social structure than the maximal lineage. The social interests in response to which these interactions occur are more complex and more diffuse than those that are served by clanship. Consequently, an organizing mechanism of a different order comes into play, the mechanism of ritual.

Ritual is the appropriate mechanism of social organization at this level because the interests involved are not of a practical or utilitarian kind but of a moral kind—in fact, the most general moral interests of the natives, the maintenance of their existing institutions and norms of social behaviour. We must emphasize that we are dealing here with levels of organization correlated with different grades of social interests, and not with hard-and-fast forms of social grouping. We are dealing with different expressions of the same underlying forces. The same categories of ritual values and forms of association serve as a differentiating and integrating mechanism both at the level of social relations between maximal lineages and at the level of interclan relations. And clanship forms the bridge between the two levels as well as the organizing factor at the lower level. Both factors operate at both levels but with inverse dominance. That this is so can be seen from the natives' habit of conceptually assimilating all their social ties to the pattern of genealogical relationship and evaluating them all by the touchstone of kinship. The basic pattern of organization is that which we have described in our analysis of the clan system.

The ritual configurations and connexions at the higher level are obviously modelled on clanship configurations and connexions. The reason for this is simply that the ritual relations we are here concerned with exist between corporate units, maximal lineages or clans, defined by the canon of agnatic descent and by their place in the whole system of clanship.

We can say then that a Talis clan has a field of ritual relations overlapping but not congruent with its field of clanship ties. The fields of ritual relations of adjacent clans are articulated with one another so as to form a connected system linking all Talis to one another. It is through this system that the major cleavage between the Talis and their congeners on the one hand, and the Namoos on the other, is transcended; and the cycle of the Great Festivals is the medium through which this ritual system is regularly, obligatorily, and conspicuously brought into action. Let us see how the system extends to the Hill Talis.

The Scheme of Ritual Collaboration among the Hill Talis

The ritual relations of clans and lineages among the Hill Talis, though based on the same principles as those of Ba'ari, have a much more complex

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elaboration. Among them the cult of the External *Bɔyar*,[1] homologous though it is in function and doctrine with its Zubiuŋ counterpart, includes peculiar esoteric elements lacking in the latter. This cult is the pivot of their Harvest Festival, *Bɔyaraam*, which takes its name from the External *Bɔyar*, of which it is essentially a sacrament. The sacrament includes an initiation cult, by which the males are brought into the *Bɔyar* sodality and bound to its obligations and observances.

Each *Bɔyar* has a number of ritual functionaries who hold office by virtue of being the heads of the maximal lineages in which these ritual offices are vested. As a rule a particular maximal lineage has the exclusive ownership of one office, and the ritual offices connected with a particular *Bɔyar* are distributed among all or most of the corporate units (maximal lineages) that owe allegiance to that *Bɔyar*. They usually include maximal lineages of a single clan, maximal lineages of other clans linked to them by ties of clanship, and territorially adjacent maximal lineages not related to them by clanship.

The cult of the Earth (*Tɛŋ*), again, is localized at a number of sacred spots, the most exalted of which are the foci of ritual association and collaboration between groups of clans and maximal lineages *not* connected by clanship. As in the *Bɔyar* cult, the ritual roles are distributed among the heads of the corporate units owing allegiance to a particular Earth shrine. Each maximal lineage has, in addition, its private lineage *bɔyar*, the symbolic seat of its own ancestors, as well as the special shrine that symbolizes and is bound up with the ritual office vested in that lineage.

Though each ritual office of a particular *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is vested in one maximal lineage, the other member-units of the congregation have an interest in that office. There are certain occasions when all the ritual functionaries must be present in order that the rites of worship may be performed. This is the case during the Great Festivals, and the concrete manifestation of this principle is the common sacrament partaken of in the rites at the *Bɔyar* and the *Tɛŋ*.

Again, there is an order of seniority among the ritual functionaries of a *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ*. The most senior is the chief custodian of that shrine. Members of his lineage have a private relationship with the shrine, in addition to their public duties in connexion with it. They may, through him, bring private sacrifices to it in misfortune, or out of gratitude. But this functionary is also the direct intermediary between the congregation and the shrine. The priestly duties of its cult fall mainly on him. He is obliged to preside at all rites in which the whole congregation takes part, and the lineages of the other functionaries are dependent on him for the proper performance of the rites. This does not give him political power over them, for he is only *primus inter pares*, but it enhances the prestige of his office and makes it the pivot of the whole constellation. Thus all the functionaries and their respective lineages have a particular interest in the senior, pivotal office.

Furthermore, the installation of a ritual functionary in his office is

[1] For the sake of clarity whenever reference is made to an external *Bɔyar*, a capital *B* will be used; when any other kind of *bɔyar* is referred to a lower-case *b* will be used.

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alw[illegible]s the privilege of another functionary of the same congregation, or of a neighbouring congregation. The effect of this is to maintain particularly close bonds of interdependence and mutual amity between pairs of clans or maximal lineages and thus to strengthen the force of ritual collaboration as a sanction of mutual loyalty and cohesion. If the *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is coterminous with a clan (as at Zubiuŋ), the relationship tends to be mutual or circular—A installs B and B installs A, or A installs B and B installs C who in turn installs A. The arrangement is then plausibly subsumed under the relations of clanship. In a congregation of unrelated maximal lineages the relationship may be mutual between some pairs of lineages and circular between other sets of lineages, which will often include lineages belonging to mutually installing pairs. Thus, A installs B and B installs A; but A also installs C, C installs D, and D installs E.

It often happens, also, that the ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage belonging to one *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is installed by a ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage of a neighbouring congregation. The two lineages may be connected by clanship ties and the arrangement explained by invoking these. Or they may be adjacent to each other; or they may belong to the same *Bɔyar* congregation but different *Tɛŋ* congregations (or vice versa), so that it is only with respect to one context that the parties can be said to belong to different ritual groupings.

In every case it comes to this: that maximal lineages bound to each other by one set of ritual ties, with respect to one focus of ritual cohesion, are divided from each other, and bound to maximal lineages of other congregations constituted with reference to the same category of ritual relations, by another set of ritual ties. Thus the division between adjacent *Bɔyar* congregations (or *Tɛŋ* congregations), mutually exclusive by reference to the particular *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* at which each worships, is bridged by the ritual interdependence, in terms of another ritual category, of some of their respective member lineages. And the system extends chainwise throughout all the clans of the Hill Talis.

We have here a more elaborate reproduction of the pattern of ritual relations that was observed to hold between Ba'ari and its neighbours. Indeed, the schematic formulation attempted above gives only an inkling of the labyrinthine intricacies of these ritual relations among the Hill Talis. In this pattern the cult of the External *Bɔyar* and the cult of the Earth have a very significant relationship, as we have previously indicated. It can be seen more explicitly than at Zubiuŋ or Ba'ari that they form polar principles in the total system of public ritual values and relations.

This appears quite clearly in the doctrines and ritual practices of the Hill Talis. *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* are always coupled together in ritual activities. Together they exercise a mystical rule over the life and health, the fertility and prosperity of man. The differences in the way in which they are concerned with these fundamentals of human existence are like a complementary division of labour. This is well shown in the annual cycle of the Great Festivals. Thus *Gɔlib*, the Sowing Festival just before the first rains, is centred on the Earth cult. It dramatizes man's dependence on the fertility of the soil and on the rain for his livelihood, and the dependence

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of these, in turn, on the mystical power of the Earth. Its chief theme, through all the rites and ceremonies of the festival, is a plea for the beneficence of the Earth in the approaching farming season. Though the chief actors are the Hill Talis, it is a festival in which all the Tallensi take part, directly or through representative ritual functionaries, since they are all under the mystical jurisdiction of the Earth; and it seeks to mobilize the goodwill of the Earth for the prosperity and fertility of all the people of the country.

At the other end of the agricultural season, when the harvest has been gathered, comes the complementary Harvest Festival of *Bɔɣaraam*, as it is called by the Hill Talis. As the name suggests, this festival is centred on the External *Bɔɣar* and is dominated by the cult of the ancestors. It is celebrated independently by each *Bɔɣar* congregation, not in common, as the *Gɔlib* is. The Namoos, and the other Talis, also have their Harvest Festivals at about the same time; and all have the same theme. They are dramatizations of man's gratitude for the crops that the soil, under man's labouring hand, has yielded, for the children that have been born, and for the welfare that has been granted to men by the Earth and the ancestors. Through all the rites and ceremonies runs the reiterated prayer that the ancestors and the Earth may unite to grant long life to men so that they may enjoy these and further blessings of the same kind.

The natives sum up the relationship between *Bɔɣar* and *Tɛŋ* in the following formula. The *Bɔɣar*, they say, rests on the Earth and cannot act without it; but the Earth would be derelict without men, the children of the ancestors whose spiritual abode is the *Bɔɣar*. The sacredness of the Earth is due to the fact that men live on its surface, tend it, and worship it.

Both the Earth cult and the *Bɔɣar* cult have a parochial aspect and a universal aspect. There are the particular *Bɔɣar* and Earth shrines, each exclusively worshipped by its own defined congregation and bearing its own name; and there are the universal cults of which these are the local embodiments. This is plain both in native comment and in the forms of rites and ceremonies. The natives say that all Talis *Bɔɣa* (including not only those of the Hill Talis but those of Zubiuŋ and other Talis of the Plain as well) are 'one and the same thing'.

So when a sacrifice is offered at a particular *Bɔɣar*, the officiant in his invocation calls upon all the Talis *Bɔɣa*, enumerating them by name, to 'gather together and accept this sacrifice'. Similarly, while every *Bɔɣar* has its own name—Bona'ab, Wannii, Samoo, and so forth—they also have the generic name of Tɔŋna'ab.[1] The *Bɔɣa* of all the Talis clans are

[1] Some of these names have obvious meanings, others have none, or have lost all semblance of meaningful forms. Bona'ab means 'Chief of Things', i.e. Great Benefactor; Samoo means 'the (uncultivated) bush at Soog', presumably because in the distant past the shrine was surrounded by uncultivated bush; Wannii can only be given a meaning by twisting the first syllable into a phonetically analogous meaningful form. Tɔŋna'ab breaks up into the two syllables *tɔŋ* (from which Tongo takes its name) which is cognate with *tɛŋ*, the Earth (cf. *tɔŋgban*, earth shrine, lit. surface of the Earth) and *na'ab*, chief. It means, therefore, Chief of the Earth, or in other words, Lord of the Country. And to the Hill Talis their *Bɔɣar* cult *is* the most important religious phenomenon in the world.

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'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔɣa* of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of every Talaŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔɣar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔɣar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔɣar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔɣar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔɣar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔɣar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkɔra*)'.

Bɔɣar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔɣar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

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fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counterbalanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field. Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔyar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔyar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔyar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔyar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine

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of the people of Gbizug is the grave of their primordial ancestor, Tɛndaan Gɛnət. This grave, situated on the reputed house-site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, is in the sole custody of Gbizug, and is associated with the tɛndaanaship, therefore with the Earth cult. But whenever a new Gbizug tɛndaana is installed, representatives of Gbeog, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra must be present at the rites performed at Gɛnət's grave. This is a matter of right and duty, subsumed under the rights and duties of their clanship ties and validated by the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas. But one segment of Wakii must also be represented at these rites, not in virtue of clanship ties but of the kinship (*mabiirət*) in the figurative sense that is held to prevail between all tɛndaana clans. It is effective in this case because of the proximity and the ritual collaboration in the Great Festivals of Wakii and Gbizug.

It is significant that the people of Soog, despite their clanship ties with Gbizug, do not come into the field of its ritual relations. On the surface this appears to be correlated with their spatial separation from Gbizug. It is only by their attendance at the exoteric ceremonies that accompany the installation or funeral of a Gbizug tɛndaana, and by the rights to special portions of meat and beer that they can exercise on these occasions, that the clanship ties between Soog and Gbizug impinge on the latter's field of ritual relations.

On the other hand, the clanship ties of Soog with Gbeog have a ritual embodiment in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. All the segments of Gbeog practise this cult; but some of them owe allegiance to the *Bɔyar* of which the people of Soog are the senior custodians, and the others have a separate *Bɔyar* of their own. Soog and Gbeog do not have a common Earth shrine. In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog forms one united community and Soog another.

In this intricate tissue of ritual relations we see again, as at Ba'ari, the interweaving of clanship ties, neighbourhood ties, and ties of ritual interdependence *per se*, forming syntheses of politico-ritual relations at a higher level than those that are possible in terms of any one of these categories. This interweaving can be seen at any of the ceremonies in which a particular field of ritual relations is actualized. It is particularly clear among the Tɛnzugu clans, where we can see, more plainly than at Gbizug or Ba'ari, how it is produced by the counterbalancing of ritual ties against clanship and local cleavages, and of ritual ties of one sort against those of another sort.

Soog has a specific ritual tie with one major segment of Sakpee, the head of which installs the senior ritual functionary of the Soog External *Bɔyar*. This segment of Sakpee, Sakpee I, has its own *Bɔyar*. But it unites with the other major segment, Sakpee II, in the worship of a common Earth shrine, the custody of which is vested in Sakpee II; and Sakpee II owes allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* Bona'ab, the senior custodian of which is the head of Kpata'ar. Soog, though linked by clanship ties with Kpata'ar, has no direct ritual connexions with it. Their fields of ritual relations overlap at Sakpee, which forms the bridge between them at this level.

Kpata'ar provides a typical instance of the structure of the ritual fields

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have not only bonds of local contiguity, but an additional tie of ritual interdependence in that their heads install each other in their respective ritual offices. Similarly, Sakpee and Samiit have an added ritual tie in that their heads each have a special role in the ceremonial installation of the other. Finally, the head of Samiit exercises a special politico-ritual function in relation to the head of Kpata'ar. It is his task, in times of great social emergency, formally to adjure the head of Kpata'ar to initiate the ritual procedures necessary to avert disaster.

Thus, underneath the general collaboration of the communicants of Bona'ab with one another in the *Bɔyar* cult, and interweaving with it, spread these particular, divergent ties between different pairs of maximal lineages. In many situations these subordinate ties hold fast where the superordinate ties of ritual collaboration between all the communicants are not strong enough to override the cleavages between them. It is a striking thing, for instance, that whereas Nakyeet yiri and Sakpee have tended to side with the Gɔlibdaana of Bunkiuk in the struggle for power that has been going on between him and the head of Kpata'ar during the last few years, Gundaat has stood staunchly by the latter. The general bond of ritual collaboration in the *Bɔyar* cult has not ensured the support of the whole Bona'ab congregation for Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm in this struggle, and even the specific ties of clanship between them and Nakyeet yidɛm have not been proof against the lure of the Gɔlibdaana's fleshpots.

It is characteristic of Tale society that the structure of a community, whether it be a permanent community or a temporary community such as emerges in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, is directly mirrored in every situation and every institution in which this structure becomes manifest. To take a very simple example: when the congregation of Bona'ab assembles there for a sacrifice, the representatives of the different maximal lineages sit in a fixed order. Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm sit in the place of greatest honour, since they are the senior custodians, and the other lineages are distributed as shown in the diagram opposite. It will be seen that this diagram gives a picture also of the structural relations between the different lineages, and incidentally of their local relations to one another. It shows in a nutshell how local, structural, and politico-ritual relations are interlocked with one another and converge to create and maintain interclan co-operation and solidarity. The diagram shows also how the ritual roles in any of the rites and ceremonies connected with the worship at the *Bɔyar* are distributed amongst the different maximal lineages.

Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm are the senior custodians also of the supreme Earth shrine of Tɛnzugu, Doo; but in the cult of Doo they have a completely different set of ritual collaborators from those associated with them in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. They have a different field of ritual relations counterpoised to that of which the External *Bɔyar* is the focus. The units associated with Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm in the cult of Doo are Degal (linked by clanship ties to them, but having its own External *Bɔyar*), Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk (who have no clanship ties with Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm, and are the senior custodians of a different External

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Bɔyar from theirs), and Tamboog (who also have no clanship ties with Kpata'ar, and have an independent External *Bɔyar*). These four units must be represented at all rites performed at Doo during the Great

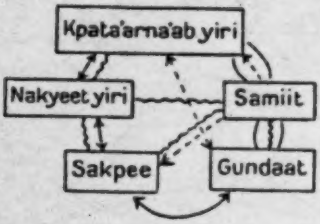
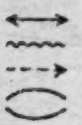


Diagram showing the seating arrangements at ceremonies in the sacred grove of the External Bɔyar BONA'AB, as reflecting the structural relations underlying ritual collaboration in the Bɔyar cult.



= Clanship ties
= Ties of local contiguity
= Specific ties of politico-ritual interdependence
= Other social ties.

Festivals. Each one has also a private Earth shrine, with which the other three groups have no connexion, but their common allegiance to Doo binds them to one another in mutual ritual dependence. This should mean also, and by all accounts formerly did mean, a bond of mutual amity and cohesion; for there is nothing, according to Tale belief, which the Earth abhors so greatly as strife between those who worship it together at the same shrine.

To-day the cult of Doo furnishes an outstanding instance of the relativity of such ritual sanctions to the structural relations of the corporate units amongst which they are effective. During the Great Festivals, the four maximal lineages meet as of old to perform the prescribed rites at Doo. For this limited period and this objective they are obliged to set aside their antagonisms and collaborate amicably. At other times, however, they are divided by the struggle for power that has been going on between the Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab. Both Degal (in spite of their clanship ties with Kpata'ar) and the majority of the Tamboog people have been seduced by the wealth and power of the Gɔlibdaana.

The pull of loyalty to Kpata'ar sustained by the common cult of Doo has not, however, remained altogether ineffective. In order to make their religious relations with Kpata'ar consistent with their newly arisen political hostility to them, the supporters of the Gɔlibdaana have tried to oust Kpata'arna'ab yidem from their traditional status in relation to Doo. They would thus, if they succeeded, have put Kpata'ar in the position of a faction opposed to the rightful principals in the cult of Doo.

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basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line, passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galɔm kihɔr*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the congregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

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tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so a supplicant coming to the *Bɔyar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔyar* in the Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence, children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔyar* must avoid all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have independent External *Bɔya*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of the same External *Bɔyar* congregation. This means that the clans and lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation, or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife, though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another, among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔyar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It emphasizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔyar* or the coercion of an adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult to which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External *Bɔyar* can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛyər*) of an individual. An ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist (*ɔn m-mar n-govor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛyəraan*) must keep the totemic avoidances of the *Bɔyar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims to the *Bɔyar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born, as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards of the *Bɔyar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

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other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔyar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔyar*.

The External *Bɔyar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔyar*, parallel to the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, each External *Bɔyar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔyar* maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Talɔŋ (*u pana baŋ Talɔŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Talɔŋ has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child'; now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider community.

The *Bɔyar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔyar*, and often invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical, anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔyar* symbolizes the ritual value of the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

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aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order bequeathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial) fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

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to the husband's own ancestors, but to all the ancestors, for the whole social order is based on the continuity of the patrilineal line.

One reason why the totemic taboos of the Hill Talis 'belong together' with the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is because all Tale ritual institutions tie up with the ancestor cult; for Tale ritual ideas and values are, as we have several times emphasized, a reflex of the social structure and this rests on a genealogical basis. But the connexion can be seen in more precise terms. Membership of the lineage, which means adherence to the norms of lineage relations symbolized in the totemic taboos, is a prerequisite for membership of the clan and for admission to the *Bɔyar* cult. Just as the constitution of the *Bɔyar* congregation embraces and rests upon the lineage and clan, so the ritual values and observances of the *Bɔyar* cult draw the ritual symbols of lineage identity and continuity into their orbit. The External *Bɔyar* is a transposition of the lineage *bɔyar* to a higher level of social integration; allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* is an extension, on this higher level, of the bond with the lineage *bɔyar*. In terms of ritual observances, admission to the covenant of the External *Bɔyar* presupposes observance of certain totemic taboos. And this mutual implication is strengthened by the fact that every male of a Talis lineage is bound to become a member of the *Bɔyar* cult. Lineage, clan, and *Bɔyar* congregation represent three interconnected levels of social relations and the ritual observances that correspond to them. The simplest level of this field system implies the existence of the most complex which in turn presupposes the existence of the simplest.

It is a point of significance that women, though bound by the totemic taboos as members of the lineage, are not admitted to the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. This is not only because the cult of the ancestors is the exclusive province of men. Women marry out of the lineage; they do not pass on to their children physical or social membership of it; they do not perpetuate the lineage. It is the men who maintain and perpetuate the corporate unity and continuity of the lineage; and it is on these that both the clan structure and the *Bɔyar* cult rest. It is the men who both keep the lineage going as a social entity symbolized in its totemic taboos, and maintain the social order of which the External *Bɔyar* is the pivot.

In sum, then, the totem stands for the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage, the External *Bɔyar* for the interdependence of lineages in a single religious community; and the two ritual principles fuse owing to the fact that this ideological community is constituted by the knitting together of maximal lineages in local clusters. At the geographical centre of the ideological community, the summit of the Tong Hills, the fusion is most complete. The avoidance of the tortoise and the water-tortoise is shared by all the clans of the centre, and is felt by all the Talis to symbolize particularly membership of the ideological community as well as the narrower allegiance to the lineage. But some clans and lineages at the centre have additional or exceptional totems; and the farther we move from the centre towards Gbizug and Ba'ari out of the region of the External *Bɔyar* cult as practised by the Hill Talis, the more conspicuous do these extra avoidances become. Maximal lineages and clans which have

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178 438 578 [556] precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 648 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gorisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere side-line. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 788 648 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come individually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

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This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relationships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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613 A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also *ipso facto* an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differen-
769 tiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as
778 well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine (*òɔɣar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a composite clan has its lineage *bɔɣar*, distinguishing it from the other segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se* by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors. The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔɣar* known as an External *Bɔɣar*. An External *Bɔɣar* is usually a sacred grove, or a shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

771 Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor
● 794 of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* is another important factor of cohesion and
182 equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of
769 the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It represents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not associated in the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, collaborate in the rites of
[778] the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social relations in terms of the External *Bɔɣar* cult, and yet a third field of corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity. Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all, moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and the tɛndaana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

613 In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the